

Deane St Mary's

September/October 2010

As the autumn season gets into gear we've news of exciting things that have taken place over the summer involving our own young people and of new things taking place from now. There's something for everyone!

We've also news of the wider church and how we can get involved in helping folk less fortunate than ourselves—overseas and here in the UK.

The subject of this month's profile is Terry Oakes who has also reported on his Oberammergau experience with Marjorie and other friends from Bolton. Augustine of Canterbury (not to be confused with ... of Hippo who wrote *The city of God*) brings our Timeline of Christianity up to date).

Many of you will be familiar with the local beauty spot of Barrow Bridge. If not or if you need a refresher, follow Barbara's guide to a walk there.

Next edition: October 19th



Scene at Soul Survivor

Bring us, O Lord, at our last awakening into the house and gate of heaven, to enter into that gate and dwell in that house, where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light; no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession; no ends or beginnings; but one equal eternity; in the habitations of thy glory and dominion, world without end.

Amen.

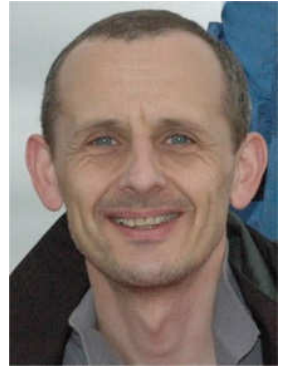
John Donne

St Mary's Info: July/August 2010

	9.00	10.30	6.00
Sep 12	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Evening Service A healthy church is a giving church
	2 Cor 8:1-7; Matt 6:19-21		
Sep 19	Holy Communion	Morning Service	Evening Service God.. can juggle!
	Pro 3:3-12; John 1:35-51		
Sep 26	Holy Communion	Morning Service	Evening Service God.. doesn't change
	Is 55:1-7; John 2:1—11		
Oct 3 *	Holy Communion	All-age Service	Café Service So why do people suffer?
	Gen 8:15—22; Matt 6:25-34		
Oct 10	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	Evening Service God... cares
	Ps 51:10-17; John 3:1-16		
Oct 17	Holy Communion	Morning Service	Evening Service God.. Won't turn a blind eye
	Vocation		
Oct 24	Holy Communion	Morning Service	Evening Service God.. Now you see him, now..
	Ps 19; John 5:19-29		
Oct 31	Holy Communion	All-age Communion	Service of Thanks- giving and Remembrance
	Pro 16:1-6; John:1-12		

*** Harvest Sunday—see article on centre spread**

Moving up a gear



At our monthly prayer meeting last week we began by reading from Matthew chapter 4 - the account of the beginnings of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee, a ministry with many challenges and encouragements. I thought that it was a particularly appropriate passage as we get into the autumn programme at Deane Parish Church and as things go up a gear. As well as the 'bread and butter' ministries of church life, we shall be back in the Memorial Hall with it's new kitchen and, for the first time ever at Deane, a **church office**! We are praying towards **Back to Church Sunday** on 26th September. The new men's ministry (**Men Of Deane**) is building up momentum with it's autumn programme just out and **Christianity Explored** kicks in from 29th September. There will also be a rolling programme of ministry training events as we go through the year ahead, kicking off on 2nd October with **Learning to Listen** - a training morning on Christian Listening. Most members of the church probably won't be aware of it, but since Easter I have also been running an ongoing programme of **preaching workshops**, which is open to preachers from any of the churches in our cluster: St Mary's, St Andrew's Over Hulton, St Bede's Morris Green, St Thomas & St John Lostock.

The Memorial Hall will be heavily used over the months ahead but we mustn't lose sight of why we have undertaken this mini-refurbishment. It is the next step in getting to our goal of building the **new parish centre**. Next year, we will re-launch the vision for the new building and with a renewed spirit pray and work as a church towards seeing that goal achieved.

If you were at the Church BBQ at the Rectory last Saturday you will know what a good time it was. There was a very encouraging turnout and the weather was glorious! We need to build into the programme more social gatherings like this since they are important in **building community**. Church is (and always has been!) about community and as we get to know each other better we will be in a far bet-

ter, and more confident, position to serve each other with the gifts that God has given us.

As the Lord Jesus began his public ministry he was tempted by the Devil to take his eyes off why he came to earth. Jesus always kept the main thing the main thing and we need to do that also. We are in a *spiritual battle*. Notice how in Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus responded to the Devil's temptations with words of Scripture. The Devil is powerless when God's people are trusting God's promises. I think that we are going to be well fed over the autumn with the John's Gospel morning sermon series, the '*Getting to know God*' series at 6pm and going through Mark's Gospel in the *Christianity Explored* courses. Jesus came to call people to repentance and into the Kingdom of God (Matt 4:17) and he establishes that Kingdom and guarantees our place in it by his death and Resurrection.

As we move up a gear at Deane we need to move prayer up a gear. Along with trusting God's promises, prayer is vital in the spiritual battle, as we see in Jesus' own example and teaching, e.g. Matt 6:5ff. At the prayer meeting last week I used the phrase '*The delightful surprise that God is already at work.*' It's so easy to get discouraged in prayer isn't it? To lose heart and even to go into a bit of a spiritual desert place. Are we confident that God is alive and kicking and at work at Deane Church, and in our lives, and in the lives of our families, friends, neighbours and colleagues? Are we confident that God really is redeeming lives and situations and whole communities? When Jesus called his first followers (Matt 4:18-22) they immediately dropped what they were doing and followed him. God had already been at work in the hearts of Peter, Andrew, James son of Zebedee and his brother John! God is already at work in the hearts of people we live among and rub shoulders with during the week, even if it isn't always obvious! There are lots of people who are just long-ing to be invited to a church service or to a *Christianity Explored* course. They will need encouragement to come along. Coming to church or to a Christian course can be scary. So we need to *bring them along*. As we pray more, we will experience more and more the delightful surprise that God is already at work in people's lives. ➡

29th St Michael and All Angels



Michael is an archangel, whose name means 'who is like unto God?' He makes various appearances throughout the Bible, from the book of Daniel to the Book of Revelation. In Daniel, he is 'one of the princes' of the heavenly host, and the special guardian of Israel. In Revelation, he is the principal fighter of the heavenly battle against the devil.

From early times, Michael's cult was strong in the British Isles. Churches at Malmesbury (Wiltshire), Clive (Gloucestershire) and Stanmer (East Sussex) were dedicated to him. Bede mentions him. St Michael's Mount in Cornwall was believed to commemorate a vision there in the 8th century. By the end of the Middle Ages, Michael had 686 English churches dedicated to him.

In art Michael is often depicted as slaying the dragon, as in the 14th century East Anglican Psalters, or in Epstein's famous sculpture at Coventry cathedral. Or he is found (in medieval art) as weighing souls, as at Chaldon (Surrey),

Swalcliffe (Oxon.), Eaton Bishop (Hereford and Worcester), and Martham in Suffolk. Michael's most famous shrine in western Europe is Mont-Saint-Michel, where a Benedictine abbey was founded in the 10th century. The photograph here is of a window in St Michael's Muncaster showing St Michael slaying the dragon.

(Continued from across) The living God is awesome yet wonderfully personal and gentle. Are we confident in him and in his word to transform lives... starting with us!?

God bless.

Terry Clark

Team Rector of Deane

This month's profile

Terry Oakes

Terry was born in Warrington Hospital in 1946. He is an only son and has two sisters. Sadly he lost a sister aged four who was a Downs Syndrome child and one of his other sisters is now wheelchair bound following a stroke. In the early part of his life the family lived with his grandparents in the village of Haydock before eventually moving to Newton-le-Willows and subsequently returned to Haydock where he lived until he married.



Terry attended primary and junior schools attached to the church of St. James the Great and lived virtually opposite the church. His secondary education was at Newton-le-Willows Grammar School which he attended until he was fifteen and then left to start work.

Having secured a job as a trainee quantity surveyor with a construction company in St. Helens he commenced a part time course on a full day release and three nights basis to attain a professional qualification. He attended Liverpool College of Building and Salford College of Technology. In 1969 he qualified as a Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and became a Fellow in 1983.

He has worked in the construction industry for three contractors and one professional practice in his working life. The last contractor he was with since 1972 but was unfortunately made redundant in November 2009. He now works as a part time consultant.

During the 1960's he formed a blues band with local friends and those at grammar school with quite a following at local gigs. In its hey day the band was the warm up or support to some well known artists such as Lulu, Tiffany, Dusty Springfield, The Fortunes, Long John Baldry, Victor Brox, Screaming Lord Sutch, Alan Price Set and Sounds Incorporated. It was in this period he met his wife Marjorie

and they married in 1968. Their first home was in Atherton and they then moved to Ashton-in-Makerfield. They have two children Jason and Nicola and four grandchildren equally represented by either sex. He is a great believer in the strength and support of the family unit and is active in many areas of their lives.

The Family moved to Bolton in 1977 to be nearer Terry's workplace and preferring the base school method of education then prevalent in Bolton. It was here through Ladybridge School and the Cub and Scout Pack at St. Mary's that they began to attend St. Mary's Deane and met most of their friends.

Before coming to Deane Terry had a very influential education and training in his belief at St. James the Great in Haydock. Here he attended Sunday School and became an altar server from the age of eleven until twenty one. Being a very high church with a full robed tradition he performed all duties in the various services including assistant, book boy, acolyte, cross bearer and lay assistant. This gave him an extensive understanding of Liturgy. For a number of years due to living opposite the church he would attend and assist the vicar at the daily 6:00 a.m. Holy Communion Service every other day Monday to Friday on a shift basis, three mornings one week and two the following. This besides the normal Sunday services! Often in the major services at Easter, Whitsun and Christmas there would be a need to rehearse due to the number of people occupying and moving around the Chancel.

He puts his trust in God in all situations and has a lot to be thankful to him for especially surviving two heart attacks and a five part heart by-pass operation. He often reflects and brings to mind his favourite passage from 2 Corinthians Chapter 4 verses 8 and 9 "we are often troubled, but not crushed; sometimes in doubt, but never in despair; there are many enemies, but we are never without a friend; and though badly hurt at times, we are not destroyed."

At Deane Terry has been an active church member sitting on the DCC for some twenty years, a Diocesan Synod representative, a Church Warden for six years, a Sides person and Sides person team

leader, chairman of the Building and Fabric Committee, a Home Group host and leader and a member of the Music Group.

He also assisted with the Cub Pack on camps and looked after both the five a side and full eleven football teams.

When not working he is often in his garden or working on his home and finds mowing the lawns therapeutic in allowing him to think things over. His hobbies are watching all kinds of sport, his favourites being Football and Rugby League supporting the Wanderers and St. Helens respectively. He also likes to read fictional novels to relax before bed and some of his preferred authors are John Grisham, James Patterson, Andrew Gross, and Wilbur Smith. His musical tastes are quite catholic from light classical to modern pop music but he does have a great leaning towards the American Bible Belt and Mississippi Delta blues artists.

When Terry takes a holiday he likes to visit historical sites as well as chasing the sun and along with Marjorie finds cruising the perfect way of doing so. They have visited the Holy Land twice and have recently returned from the Passion Play in Oberammergau. In 2009, visiting the Holy Land for the second time, they found an extraordinary guide who really brought Jesus alive with her amazing knowledge and contacts making them feel as if they had really walked in his footsteps.

He now looks forward to eventual full retirement and a new vibrant church at St. Mary's with more, younger, committed families involving themselves in church life.

23rd September Daytime equals night

September 23 is the **autumnal equinox** (if you live in the northern hemisphere) or the vernal (Spring) equinox (if you live in the southern hemisphere) The equinoxes occur in March and September, when the Sun is 'edgewise' to the Earth's axis of rotation, so that everywhere on earth has twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of darkness.

Soul Survivor

You'd think there'd have to be a very good reason why we empty the youth bank account once a year and head off to the other end of the country to stay on a muddy field in tents that leak for an event hosted by a middle aged man. Actually there are several and I will share a few. Easily the most exciting thing was watching hundreds of people make commitments to Jesus;



what made it more special was that four of them had come with us. Please pray for these people that they will continue to walk with the Lord when they get home and back to school or college. Others of us have had God speak to us and challenge us in new ways, breaking our hearts for the things he desires. On top of that we had some great teaching and were privileged enough to worship with 8,500 Christians twice a day.

The final thing that deserves a mention is that over the 5 days we've really built our relationships up with each other; I think it's a by-product of doing life with people for five days. In John 17 Jesus prays that his people would be one as he and his father are one, a loving community. I really felt like over the week we got a glimpse of



what that looks like and I'm praying that would extend through our church in Deane.

To all of you who prayed for us or helped keep us out of the red we are all very grateful and are very much looking forward to next year.

Dave

I'll never understand why

we don't have a waiting list of people wanting to help with our youth and children's work. It's such a huge privilege to walk with young people as they attempt to make sense of their world and as they meet God for the first time and get to know him and be transformed by him. As you read these articles, please do pray for our young people and for our youth leaders, and if God's telling you to start getting involved with this work - have a word with me or Terry.

CYFA

The basics of CYFA have remained the same over the last term. A bunch of 14-18 year olds get together to study the bible together and pray together over pizza and some lovely baking provided by Margaret Rutter and Alison Partington.

But Cyfa's been a pretty interesting place to be over the last term. We've seen more and more young people turn up to study God's word, some for the first time. It's been really exciting seeing people getting to grips with who God is and what he's done for them, but also quite a balancing act to keep those young people who have known God for years growing in their faith whilst also supporting those who are still learning how to operate a bible.

Over the last term we have been exploring questions about the Christian faith suggested by the young people themselves. These have included "Is the bible sexist?", "Why does a loving God allow Hell and suffering on earth?" and "Is it sensible to date at the moment?". We've had some great discussions, and rummaged through a lot of the bible as we've searched together for the answers. On top of all that, we've had a couple of visits to the Rectory for lunch! Cyfa have requested that we study another book of the bible in the Autumn term, so we're going to study Paul's letter to the Colossians... with plenty more cake! I'm looking forward to moving this group back into the memorial hall, as I'm not sure we can cram many more people into my front room.

Thanks to Margaret Rutter for stepping in to help with CYFA this

year once Joel had moved on and for offering to continue in this role.

The Element

In February 2010 in a little meeting in a pub, Sean, Joel, and I agreed it was time the young people of The Element really started to study the bible for themselves, rather than just listening to our little interpretations of it. We



set the rather ambitious target of studying the whole of Luke's gospel with this group. The Element has continued to grow this year seeing an average of 25 young people turn up each Thursday night. It's really exciting to see how the young people value this club and want to invite their friends to it, and also to see those light bulb moments, when some of these young people hear about Jesus for the first time, or grasp something that they hadn't realised before about Jesus' power or how God is at work. Many of these young people have now got into the habit of asking Sean's three questions when they've read a bible passage—What happened? What did we learn about God? What does this mean to us, today?—equipping these guys to read the bible for themselves. The slightly more boisterous group have been engaging with the bible through shouting out and sometimes even acting out the missing words of bible passages as we read, and grappling with how any of this has anything to do with our everyday lives. I am pleased to say we have now all made it through Luke's gospel!

This term, we'll be moving back into the memorial hall and will be reunited with our pool table and table tennis table. We're hoping to do the youth version of Christianity Explored during our talk times which should help us make sure we all have a good basic understanding of what the Christian faith is about, and that everyone has the opportunity to consider what they make of the claims of the Christian faith for themselves. (Continued — turn over 6 pages))

Timeline of Christianity

Augustine of Canterbury

After the withdrawal of the [Roman legions](#) from the province of Britannia in 410, the natives of the province were left to defend themselves against the attacks of the Saxons. Before the withdrawal Britannia had been converted to Christianity and had even produced its own heretic in [Pelagius](#). Britain sent three bishops to the [Council of Arles](#) in 314, and a Gaulish bishop went to the island in 396 to help settle disciplinary matters. Material remains testify to a growing presence of Christians, at least until around 360. After the legions left, pagan tribes settled the southern parts of the island, but western Britain, beyond the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, remained Christian. This native [British Church](#) developed in isolation from Rome under the influence of missionaries from Ireland and was centred on monasteries instead of bishoprics. Other distinguishing characteristics were its calculation of the date of [Easter](#) and the style of the [tonsure](#) haircut that clerics wore. Evidence for the survival of Christianity in the eastern part of Britain during this time includes the survival of the cult of [St Alban](#) and the occurrence in place names of *eccles*, derived from the Latin *ecclesia*, meaning "church". There is no evidence that these native Christians tried to convert the Anglo-Saxons. The invasions destroyed most remnants of Roman civilization in the areas held by the Saxons and related tribes, including the economic and religious structures.

Augustine of Canterbury (*circa* first third of the 6th century - 26 May 604) was a [Benedictine monk](#) who became the first [Archbishop of Canterbury](#) in the year 598. He is considered the "Apostle to the English" and a founder of the English Church. Augustine was the [prior](#) of a monastery in Rome when [Pope Gregory the Great](#) chose him in 595 to lead a mission, usually known as the [Gregorian mission](#), to Britain to convert the [pagan](#) King [Æthelberht](#) of the [Kingdom of Kent](#) to [Christianity](#). Kent was probably chosen because it was near the Christian kingdoms in [Gaul](#) and because Æthelberht had married a Christian princess, [Bertha](#), daughter of

[Charibert I](#) the [King of Paris](#) who was expected to exert some influence over her husband. Before reaching Kent the missionaries had considered turning back but Gregory urged them on and, in 597, Augustine landed on the [Isle of Thanet](#) and proceeded to Æthelberht's main town of Canterbury.

King Æthelberht converted to Christianity and allowed the missionaries to preach freely, giving them land to found a monastery outside the city walls. Augustine was consecrated bishop of the English and converted many of the king's subjects, including thousands during a mass baptism on [Christmas Day](#) in 597. Pope Gregory sent more missionaries in 601, along with encouraging letters and gifts for the churches, although attempts to persuade the native [Celtic](#) bishops to submit to Augustine's authority failed. [Roman Catholic](#) bishops were established at London and Rochester in 604, and a school was founded to train [Anglo-Saxon](#) priests and missionaries. Augustine also arranged the consecration of his successor, [Laurence of Canterbury](#). Augustine died in 604 and was soon revered as a [saint](#).



The ultimate measure of a man or woman is not where he stands in moments of convenience, but where he stands in moments of challenge, moments of great crisis and controversy. And this is where I choose to cast my lot today. There may be others who want to go another way, but when I took up the cross I understood its meaning. It is not something that you merely put your hands on. The cross is something that you bear and ultimately you die on.

Martin Luther King

One Family. Planting hope. Growing Futures.

Harvest Sunday – 3rd October

This Harvest we will once again be using the Tearfund Harvest resource in the morning services. The focus this year is on the work of Tearfund partner Wholistic Development Organisation (WDO) in Cambodia. Set up and run by Pokteuv Thida, WDO reaches into some of the most rural and deprived corners of Cambodia. Thida came from a poor rural area himself and when he became a Christian 10 years ago, he asked God to use him to work in poor communities. This he has done through founding WDO.

WDO works by mobilising local Christians and pastors. We will learn about their work in one village and meet a family, called the Tuchs who they have helped. The love and concern of the church in addition to the agricultural training from WDO have had a great impact on this family. The changes brought about are visible. Instead of going hungry they are now able to eat 2 meals a day. There is a community rice store and the Tuchs have been loaned chickens, fish and a pig to breed. They have also been provided with a bicycle to enable the children to get to school. All this is enabled by WDO, distributed by the local church and provides a sustainable income for the family.

Life is still hard for the family however. Tol carries 600 buckets of water a day to keep his crops alive and whilst Tearfund were there filming their mini-reservoir ran dry following an unusually hot summer. They had no other water for their crops and without this water their crops will die. They were praying for rain but the support of WDO means that they will not have to send their children to bed without any

**Tol and Mol Tuch
and their 4 children**



meals any more. The work of WDO and the local church gives this family hope.

This harvest you can help give hope to this family and others like them in Cambodia. Tearfund envelopes will be available in church from the end of September. Either instead or as well as a traditional harvest gift, please consider whether you can give financially to bring hope to families in Cambodia living in material and spiritual poverty.

Did you miss it?

In the last magazine I asked if people would like to contribute odd pieces of gold from, say, broken chains, watches or single earrings, etc, which on their own don't amount to much but collected together can be quite valuable. I am pleased to say that a result of the appeal in May, through the church shop, we were able to raise over £100. A big thank you to the donors. I wonder if we can do the same (or better) again.

Bob Benyon

Handicraft Group Autumn Coffee Morning

The Handicraft Group will be holding their

Autumn coffee morning

on SATURDAY 30th OCTOBER from 10 a.m. to 12noon.

Tickets will be available from the beginning of October at the usual price of **50p (including refreshments)** from any of the members, or just come along on the day (Children free).

Proceeds will as usual be going towards the

NEW CHURCH HALL.

Thank you all for your past support!

We look forward to seeing you in October.

Growing with Others

General Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was once invited to give 'a very short word' at a public gathering, so he stood up and preached a one word sermon: 'Others...'

That word goes to the very heart of what it means to be Church. The New Testament writers, for instance, use the word 'saint' 62 times. In every case bar one they use the plural form 'saints', and even the singular use of the word says 'greet every saint'.

In other words, the concept of a solitary Christian was as foreign to New Testament writers as it has been ever since in the writings of Christian Leaders. John Wesley once wrote, 'God knows nothing of solitary religion. No man ever went to heaven alone.'

Perhaps we all have a natural tendency to equate growth and success with the individual gifts of larger than life leaders, but the Booths and Wesleys of this world were only successful because they understood that in God's economy, growing with and through others is not just a good plan, but his only plan.

A story is told of the moment that Jesus returned to heaven and the angels asked him what was now planned to follow his amazing life, death and resurrection. Jesus replied that he'd left a small group of his disciples to spread the Gospel and grow his Church. When the angels asked 'What else?', he replied, 'There is nothing else', and the angels were stunned and amazed and awe-struck at the idea that a few weak and fallible human beings, living and working with each other, could actually give birth to a movement that in time would grow the Church and change the world.

Perhaps you have a dream of growing something significant in your own church, community or organisation, or even simply in your own life. Whatever your vision for growth, be it personal or very public, make sure that a profound connection and commitment to 'others' and for 'others' is at the very heart of all your plans.

Phil Potter is Director of Pioneer Ministry in Liverpool Diocese and the author of The Challenge of Change, BRF, £7.99. Details at: www.brfonline.org.uk/9781841016047. (Extract in Parish Pump)

Wednesday evenings

from Wednesday 29th September

in the Memorial Hall

CHRISTIANITY
EXPLORED

7:30pm puddings and tea / coffee

the course will start at

8:00pm and finish at 9:30pm.

Speak to Terry for more info.

We will also run a day time course if there is demand.

Learning to Listen

Christian Listening Training

Saturday 2nd October

10:00am - 12.30 in the Memorial Hall.

with Jane Stephens, Acorn Trust trained listening trainer

It is free - people just need to sign up in church so we



Acorn Christian Healing Foundation
Listening, Healing & Reconciliation

VOLTAGE

Voltage has been meeting in Sutton community centre since January. We've been spending a lot of time making bracelets and other crafts, playing badminton, playing on the PS2 and playing "The cereal box game", and even had a few moments of



breaking into song and dance. For many of the young people who come to this group, they've had little opportunity to hear about Jesus or look at the bible for themselves. We realised that for some of these young people we needed to put God on the table for the first time.

So, we're spending time doing just that, putting God on the table, writing a comment or question about God on a sheet of paper on the table for the young people to chat about and write about. Sometimes these conversations go nowhere, and sometimes they're really exciting. We've seen two young people this year say they want to be Christians. We've given these young people bibles and bible reading notes. Please pray that they would continue to grow in their relationship with God and that they would be allowed to come to church.

Karen

PRISONERS' PENFRIENDS

About four years ago I saw an article in the Magistrates' magazine about writing to prisoners in gaol, and it asked for volunteers. I contacted the organiser, Gwyn Morgan, who is Welsh but runs the scheme from central London, and she sent me details and a questionnaire to know more about me. I then waited until a suitable prisoner was available; now I have known four.

The first one was a very sad character who was basically illiterate (by no means unusual in the prison population I'm afraid). He

relied on a cell mate to read my letters and answer them to his dictation, but we did exchange drawings of flowers and balloons at times! He was an `old lag`, in and out of prison for small scale offences, and living in hostels for his brief periods of freedom.

The second prisoner was younger, had spent the majority of his life in care, and had had a very troubled relationship with a girlfriend, which had ended up with him beating up her new boyfriend very badly. He particularly liked the programme `Lost` and was looking forward to watching it when he got out.

The third prisoner, who I still have contact with from time to time, is a `lifer` but had previously no record, and is involved with a series of appeals against sentence. He's an educated man, and recently married his long time girlfriend in prison (he sent me a photo). I also have a fourth prisoner, a life long addict who is now seriously trying to turn his life around, to whom I've just started writing.

I have given you an idea of the range of likely writers, including the fact that most are male, as is the prison population. The only thing it `costs` me is a bit of time about once a month and two stamps.

Gwyn does a great deal to safeguard her writers. She herself visits prisoners and advertises in prison for those interested in being written to. You write to her post office box in London with inside an open letter with the prisoner's name and a stamp on it-all mail to prisoners is checked. They also write through her. There are rules about what you can write- limited personal information, no addresses, and some of us choose to use a different surname (I have never told a prisoner I am a magistrate!), and no gifts although we can send cards. When I'm on holiday I bring a postcard back for them and they say it brightens their cell.

Gwyn also organised some meetings amongst writers a year ago, and I attended one in Chester, which was interesting. If you are interested in this work and want to know more, I'm very happy to talk to you in more detail, and I have her email contact as well.

Barbara Winder

Oberammergau 2010

On the 7th June 2010, a party of 37 Christians of all denominations departed from Manchester airport for what transpired to be an experience of a lifetime. The party was led by the Rev. David Griffiths and supported by Rev. John Howard Norman (Methodist minister). We stayed for two nights in Oberammergau and then moved on into Austria for five nights where we stayed in the beautiful pilgrimage village of Maria Alm.

Background to the Passion Play

In 1633, in the clutches of war, poverty, and the plague, the villagers of Oberammergau in southern Germany prayed to God to deliver their village from more death and destruction, and they pledged to perform a passion play. God heard their prayers and there was no more plague in the village. From 1680 the villagers decided to hold the play at the beginning of each decade and, with the exceptions of 1770 where it was forbidden and 1940 during the second world war, they have faithfully carried out their pledge. Every ten years there is a performance, and still to this day the villagers meet in the theatre a year before the start of the play season and renew their vow.

None of the actors are full time professionals but the main characters are paid a small salary to compensate them for loss of earnings. To perform in the play you have to have either been born in the village or have lived there for at least twenty years.

The Play

The play is now performed in an open air theatre with a sliding roof to keep the audience and cast dry in periods of bad weather. The theatre holds 4,720 people and is full for all performances; this year there are 102 performances from 15th May to 3rd October. The play is in two halves from 14.30 till 17.15 and starts again after everyone has had dinner at 20.00 till 23.00.

The play used to be performed in the cemetery but in the 19th century large crowds came from all over the world so they had to

build a theatre, and now it is so popular they estimate that over 500,000 people see the play in a season.

The play commemorates the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, both as a drama and as an opportunity for meditation. Although the play is performed in German each person in the audience gets a transcript in their own language so they can follow very clearly what is being said.

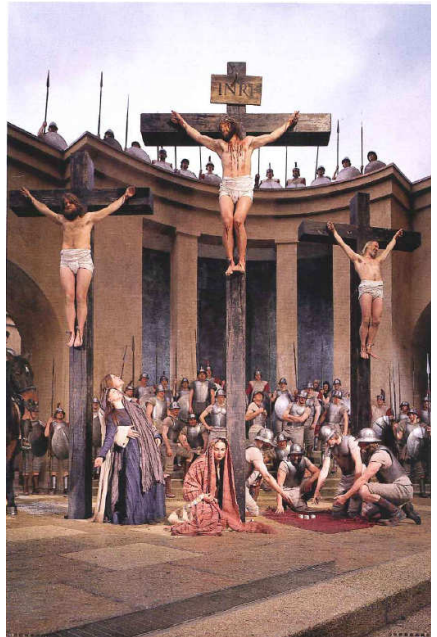
There are about 300 actors in the play with a large choir of 50, the singing is stunning and the acoustics in the theatre are incredible. The crowd scenes along with the live animals are full of action and add to the realism.

During the play there are "Living Images" consisting of actors in motionless tableaux depicting Old Testament events; these are intended to aid the theological analysis. All the events in the play (apart from Veronica whipping Jesus on the way to Golgotha) are taken from the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and the Gospels.

After the play

At our group sessions in Maria Alm it was apparent that many of us learnt different things from the passion play depending on where you are on your spiritual journey with Jesus. Some of us got very emotional due to the way Jesus was so brutally and harshly treated finally paying the ultimate sacrifice of dying on the cross to save us all from our sins.

The play highlighted the deep political tensions between Pilate and Caiaphas, something many of us had not previously considered and the important role Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus played in speaking up for Jesus.



Judas had a large part in the play and is shown as a tragic figure who did not want the death of Jesus, but only intended to compel a meeting of Jesus with the High Council. In discussions many of us felt our perception of Judas had changed.



Going to Oberammergau is probably only second to going on a Holy Land pilgrimage as a way of meeting Jesus face to face. If you can possibly manage it put a date in your diary for 2020, it is a never to be forgotten experience.

Terry Oakes

Prayer of an unknown Confederate soldier killed at the Battle of Gettysburg, 1863

I asked for strength that I might achieve;
I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health that I might do greater things;
I was given infirmity that I might do better things.
I asked for riches that I might be happy;
I was given poverty that I might be wise.
I asked for power that I might have the praise of men;
I was given weakness that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for things that I might enjoy life;
I was given life that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for,
But everything that I had hoped for.
Almost despite myself my unspoken prayers were answered;
I am, among all men, most richly blessed.

Three Bishops Holy Land Pilgrimage 2011

The Bishops of Manchester, Bolton and Middleton are to lead a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land from 19-27 November 2011, an eight-day journey which will take in many of the key moments in the life and ministry of Jesus. On arrival at the Mediterranean coast, the bishops will lead the group north to the Galilee region where they will spend time in Nazareth, Cana of Galilee and around the shores of the Sea of Galilee. After time in Galilee the pilgrims will journey south for several days exploring the Jerusalem area including a half-day visit inside the Palestinian town of Bethlehem where a service of the nativity will be celebrated.

The group will also be able to take in the Mount of Olives, Mount Zion and the Old City of Jerusalem where they will follow the famous via dolorosa. Each day there will be short services, readings and historical introductions to the sites visited. In Bethlehem the group will have the opportunity to learn about and reflect on current realities and tensions for Christians and their neighbours in the Holy Land, as well as meeting with local church leaders and visiting various projects.

The Bishops hope many will want to join them on this unique opportunity to follow in the steps of Jesus, and support our Christian brothers and sisters in this troubled region.

The pilgrimage is open to everyone. The cost including en suite half-board accommodation., local guides, airport taxes and travel to and from the Manchester area is £1395.

The Christian company organising the pilgrimage is Lightline Pilgrimages, Epping Essex, CM16 7PE, tel 01992 576065. There is also a link from the Diocese of Manchester website.

Cat, horse, dog,, lamb, frog, monkey, lion, donkey, ox...
Which does not appear in the Bible? Answer over.

Fair Trade Stall

The Fair Trade stall at church has been running now for over 5 years. When it was started the range of Fair Trade items stocked in the main supermarkets was very limited but since then things have changed significantly with many of the mainstream supermarkets selling a wide range fairly traded products including clothes as well as food items. As a result it has been decided that it no longer necessary to run the stall in church each month. We continue to be a Fair Trade church which means that we will seek to use Fair Trade products as much as possible in our services and meetings. Please continue to buy fairly traded products whenever possible when you are doing your shopping and if you are in town please support the Justicia shop on Knowsley Street which stocks a large range of crafts and products from around the world that

It's never too soon to start collecting things for your **Operation Christian Child** shoebox. More info next time.

Ladies' Guild

Sep 14 Terry Clark
Sep 28 Ken Tidmarsh -
Blood Donation
Oct 12 Harvest Supper

Kitchen equipment needed!

It would help things along very much with re-equipping the hall kitchen if you could search your kitchen cupboards for unused equipment in good condition, e.g. bowls, steamers, electric mixers, and anything you think might be useful. If you suggest to Nola Kilsby or Sylvia Harris what you can offer they would let you know if it would be useful.



Cat and monkey don't appear in the Bible.

Men of Deane

The Men of Deane is a new venture started in the Summer of 2010 for men of all ages (not necessarily church attenders). We typically have at present 10-12 in the group and it has become a forum of excellent discussion and social events. So far, we've held an archery event, croquet evening and a pub social which included several topical discussions suggested by members of the group. It provides an ideal environment to get to know other members of the congregation in an informal atmosphere and will hopefully continue to grow in numbers.

All men are more than welcome to attend.

Please contact Lee Higson (leehigson@hotmail.com / 0771 200 3290) or Rev. Terry Clark (clark@clark.cc / 01204 61819) for further details.

The following events have been planned for the last quarter of 2010:

Thursday 16th September - Wine Tasting

The Rectory (234 Wigan Road), 7:30pm start.

Saturday 16th October - Men's Breakfast

Memorial Hall, 08:30am start.

Small charge to cover the cost of catering.

Guest speaker joining us to share some thoughts after the breakfast, Subject to be confirmed.

Thursday 18th November - Quiz Night

Memorial Hall lounge, 7:30pm start.

Multimedia type quiz played in teams with a wide range of subject questions. Nibbles and drinks will be available.

Non-alcoholic drinks and cheese and biscuits will also be available. Please bring along your favourite bottle.

Wednesday 22nd December - Christmas Social

The King's Head (room at the end of the bar), 7:30pm start.

This social night will be concluded with a walk over to the chinese for a fish and chip supper.

63 STEPS WALK

This walk has changed quite a bit over the years that I have taken it. Some years ago you could enter it at the point where Scout Road dips down into a gorge past some houses, and you could at that point enter the river gorge and walk through it. However both footpaths have been re-sited and it is now only possible to briefly enter the gorge at the Barrow Bridge end before being forced to climb the steps. Nonetheless it is still a pleasant walk into Barrow Bridge from Scout Road although a potentially muddy one after wet weather.



It is also entirely possible to do it the other way around, although the parking is less certain at the Barrow Bridge end. This is not a long walk—about 3 miles even with diversions.

I am assuming you have a car if you want to start from Scout Road. Take the ring road until you turn left at the traffic lights up Old Kiln Lane, and start to climb the slopes of the moors. At the top of the lane, cross the major road with care, passing Bob Smithy Inn on your left onto Scout Road. When you get to the brow of the hill, look for parking places and the footpath sign on your right—the road is wider here. Do not go as far down as the group or fold of cottages on your right and if you get to the sharp dip and bend, you have gone too far!

Leave the car and take the footpath that dips through stone walls down to your right with a small pleasant stream and some farms to your right—this is usually the wettest section, so take care. You will eventually take a stile to your left and go on to more open moorland and gorse covered pasture. If you look behind you will see Win-

ter Hill and the mast, but ahead you can see Bolton and an old chimney. The moorland descends and you come to the famous 63 steps which take you down to a rough track by a broader stream on your left—good dog or children paddling territory. By a gate you'll see a narrow road that comes in from the left and meanders through the old mill village of Barrow Bridge. If you don't know the village, it is well worth a visit, with pretty cottages which have bridges over a stream, almost Cotswold-like at times.

After viewing the village retrace your steps. You now have a choice, either to climb the steps or to continue along the stream for a short way along the gorge. Eventually, however, you will be forced to climb another set of steps to your left out of the gorge and back onto the moorland you first descended. Now you can either totally retrace your steps, or bear right through a series of field tracks, making for the fold of cottages. You will eventually join a track through dry stone walls until you emerge in this fold of pretty old stone cottages. You will soon emerge on Scout Road where you need to turn left to re-join your car.

Harvest time for YOU

Sometimes a law of nature is very similar to a law of the spirit. Take the whole business of harvest, or 'sowing and reaping'. The Bible tells us: "A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much." (2 Corinthians 9:6)

The most sensitive nerve on our body is the one that runs to our cheque book. Money represents our time, our security and our hard work. It gives us independence and power. So when God begins to talk to us about giving more of our money to him - sowing it in his service - we can feel very alarmed.

The seed a farmer sows in a field may sometimes be lost, but not the seed that we give to God. What we sow with regards to our time, gifts and money in service to others God will make sure we one day reap - in a harvest of spiritual riches that we can never lose.

S t M a r y's D i r e c t o r y

Team Rector	Terry Clark	01204 61819
Team Vicar	John Armstrong	01204 651851
OLM	Elizabeth Plant	01204 63730
Retired Clergy	Joyce Mitson	01204 655081
Readers	David Dewhurst	01204 651347
	Nola Kilsby	01204 665700
Wardens	Les Kilsby	01204 665700
	Beccy Rutter	01204 654737
	Ken Tidmarsh	01204652184

PCC

Lay Chair	Jane Hampson	01204 848433
Hon Treasurer	Les Kilsby	01204 665700
Hon Secretary	Bryan Shephard	01942 817288

Other Responsibilities

Flowers	Josie Crompton	01204 655964
Gift Aid Sec	Les Kilsby	01204 665700
Handicraft Group		

	Dorothy Benyon	01204 417794
Ladies' Guild	Josie Crompton	01204 655964
	Pat Sewell	01204 61278
Magazine Editor	Anne Roberts	01204 849468

Memorial Hall Bookings	Elizabeth Tidmarsh	01204 652184
	Beccy Rutter	01204 654737

Music Group	Alan Bovis	
Organist		
Parent/Toddler Group		
Verger	Josie Crompton	01204 655964
Weddings Admin	Anne Roberts	01204 849468

Sunday Schools

Climbers (3-7)	Lynda Smith	01204 62093
Explorers (7-11)	Paula Small	01204 650981
Pathfinders 7-9		
CYFA (10-13)	Karen Greenhalgh	01204 654737

Youth Groups

Voltage/Element	Karen Greenhalgh	01204 654737
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Uniformed Organisations

Rainbows	Margaret Latchford	01204 657101
Brownies	Anne Calderbank	01204 398206
	Liz Valentine	01024 651692
Guides	Carole Baxendale	01204 419167

Please tell Anne Roberts of any error or omissions.